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ABSTRACT

This document contains 13 presentations/discussion summaries and 10 supporting 'thesis' papers from a symposium on selected issues in human resources development (HRD) in Europe. The following summaries are included: "Introduction" (Sabine Manning); "Developing Flexibility in Pursuit of Competitiveness" (Nick Boreham); "Competence and Learning in Late Career" (Leif Lahn); "Professionals as Flexible Workers or Portfolio People" (Graham Guest); "Notion of a 'Flexible Worker' Challenging 'Professional Identity'" (Nick Boreham, Martin Fischer, Graham Guest, Gerald Heidegger, Mike Kelleher, Jim Stewart); "Organisational Innovation and Learning: Developmental Work Tasks" (Barry Nyhan); "A Package for Integrated Learning and Development" (Jonathan Winterton); "Working and Learning Practices in an Oil Refinery" (Nick Boreham); "Gender Specific Key Qualifications for Working Life" (Gerald Heidegger); "Integrating Work and Learning in Organisations" (Nick Boreham, Alan Brown, Leif Lahn, Martin Mulder, Barry Nyhan, Jim Stewart, Jonathan Winterton); "Organisational Learning and Knowledge Sharing in the Chemical Industry" (Martin Fischer); "Organisational Innovation and Learning: Challenges for the Actors" (Barry Nyhan); "Knowledge Sharing as Both Managerial and Participatory Approach" (Gerald Heidegger); and "Final Note on the Debate across Issues" (Jim Stewart). Thesis papers included "Developing Flexibility in Pursuit of Competitiveness" (Nicholas Boreham); "Competence and Learning in Late Career. European Perspectives on the Management of Motivation" (Leif Chr. Lahn); "Professionals as Flexible Workers or Portfolio People" (Graham Guest); "Organisational Innovation and Learning: Developmental/Challenging Work Tasks Are a Prerequisite for Implementing a Learning Organisation" (Barry Nyhan, Peter Cressey, Masimo Tomassini, Michael Kelleher, Rob Poell); "A Package for Integrated Learning and Development" (Jonathan Winterton); "Working and Learning Practices in an Oil Refinery" (Nicholas Boreham); "Gender Specific Key Qualifications for Working

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Life" (Gerald Heidegger, Anke S. Kampmeier, Beatrix Niemeyer); "Organisational Learning and Knowledge Sharing in the Chemical Industry" (Martin Fischer); "Organisational Innovation and Learning: The Implementation of Learning Organizations Raises Serious Challenges for Vocational Education and Training and Human Resources Development Actors" (Barry Nyhan, Peter Cressey, Massimo Tomassini, Michael Kelleher, Rob Poell); and "How to Pinpoint the European Perspective of HRD? Methodological Considerations for Building the Resource Base." (Sabine Manning). (The final paper lists 18 references.) (MN)

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The European Perspective of HRD

A Debate on Selected Issues Put Forward by the EHRD Network

Symposium at ECER 2002, Lisbon

13 September 2002

Sabine Manning, Editor

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The European perspective of HRD
A debate on selected issues put forward by the EHRD Network

Symposium at ECER 2002, Lisbon 13 September 2002 (see programme)
Chairs: Michael Kelleher, Sabine Manning & Martin Mulder
Editor of proceedings: Sabine Manning

Introduction to the symposium (Sabine Manning)

Block 1: Notion of 'flexible worker' challenging 'professional identity'
- **Developing flexibility in pursuit of competitiveness** (Nick Boreham)
- **Competence and learning in late career** (Leif Lahn)
- **Professionals as flexible workers or portfolio people** (Graham Guest)
- **Discussion**

Block 2: Integrating work and learning in organisations
- **Organisational innovation and learning: Developmental work tasks** (Barry Nyhan)
- **A package for integrated learning and development** (Jonathan Winterton)
- **Working and learning practices in an oil refinery** (Nick Boreham)
- **Gender specific key qualifications for working life** (Gerald Heidegger)
- **Discussion**

Block 3: Knowledge sharing as both managerial and participatory approach
- **Organisational learning and knowledge sharing in the chemical industry** (Martin Fischer)
- **Organisational innovation and learning: Challenges for the actors** (Barry Nyhan)
- **Discussion**

Final note on the debate across issues (Jim Stewart)

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Subject **Introduction** (Sabine Manning)

Outline Welcome all to our symposium on HRD in Europe. This is the highlight (I hope!) of our one-year accompanying measure supported by the Fifth Framework Programme and carried out in collaboration with a network of more than 200 experts in European HRD, the EHRD Network. Important to note: we agreed on a broad concept of HRD (link to outline), also extending into VET (vocational education and training), and we focused on the European perspective of HRD (link to outline). You can find all the preparatory documents for this symposium in the EHRD Base (symposium programme), including a discussion paper I prepared on taking stock of the European perspective of HRD.

Today we want to discuss a few selected issues of the European perspective. These are the following:

- The notion of 'flexible worker' challenging 'professional identity';
- Integrating work and learning in organisations, including the shift from skill building to performance improvement and competence development;
- Knowledge sharing as both managerial and participatory approach.

As you can see we have got a panel of leading experts for discussing these issues. Would you please introduce yourselves briefly (names below linked to who'who):

Nick Boreham, Martin Fischer, Graham Guest, Gerald Heidegger, Mike Kelleher, Leif Lahn, Martin Mulder, Barry Nyhan, Jim Stewart, Jonathan Winterton.

Mike Kelleher and Martin Mulder will moderate the debate, Jim Stewart will have the final word, and I shall prepare the review of debate – the floor is yours!

Reference Discussion paper: Manning 2002

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Subject **Developing flexibility in pursuit of competitiveness** (Nick Boreham)

Outline

My presentation is based on the Framework IV TSER project 'work process knowledge in technological and organisational development' (WHOLE). The final report has just been published (book on work process knowledge - see reference), so you can refer to this if you want some further details. I am just going to pick out main points of the project that are related to the issue of developing flexibility in pursuit of competitiveness.

This project looked at changes in European work processes and in particular the so-called modernisation programme supported by the European Commission. That is to say, this looked at changes from bureaucratic type organisations to much more organic work organisation, the change from hierarchical organisations where managers do the thinking to organisations which are much more participatory, where everybody is supposed to be involved in continuous improvement. It is the European Commission's policy that European industry should modernise itself in this way, and it is also the policy of most of the European member states that industry should change in the direction I have just described.

However, there is empirical evidence that the modernisation programme is actually moving very slowly, although there are some examples of learning organisations with much more flexible ways of doing work. There is a lot of evidence that this is a very gradual transformation. For example, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Standards carries out regular surveys of working conditions in Europe. These surveys show that most workers in Europe do not work under modernised conditions. There have also been a number of case studies which have looked in detail at modernisation attempts (some of these are especially described in chapter 15 of the book) and go into detail why modernisation attempts have failed.

There may be many reasons why the modernisation programme is moving slowly: flexible work may not in fact confer a competitive advantage, there may be a shortage of the skills needed for flexible work. However, my thesis in this presentation is to point to an argument which comes out of the work process knowledge report, which is that there is another reason which we can see as to why flexibility is not going to be taken up with great enthusiasm. Basically, any functioning work system is a social system which achieves a certain degree of equilibrium. This equilibrium is a particular way of distributing certain things throughout the organisation, it's a way of distributing responsibilities, it's a way of distributing rewards, and it's a way of distributing knowledge. The central issue in the modernisation programme is to reorganise European work places so that the distribution of knowledge is very different than has been in many traditional work systems.

The point that I want to make is that the case studies of the failure of modernisation projects show that modernisation tends to upset the delicate social contracts in the organisation. If you try to introduce a new work system which relies on different ways of distributing knowledge then this is very threatening to everybody involved, because it upsets the equilibrium which was established in the previous work system. Generally speaking, the modernisation requires much more knowledge creation and sharing at all levels of the organisation and it also requires much more lateral communication and much more bottom-up communication of

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knowledge within the organisation. The introduction of more flexible systems of continuous improvement imply changes of this sort, and these tend to challenge the existing social relations, and this is experienced as a threat by everybody involved.

So the point that we can draw from this is that the European modernisation programme is not just a process of vocational education and training and human resource development. There may be a cost to this, a cost in terms of the damage it does to the social systems we call work. It may be that many of these costs exceed the benefits to be gained in productivity. This is a fact which may underline the slow movement towards modernised work in Europe. But as far as this particular symposium is concerned it should draw our attention to the fact that if we want to be involved in modernisation then we need to address a much broader range of issues and skills, competences and training methods.

Reference Thesis: included in Manning 2002a; final project report: Boreham et al. 2000a; publication: Boreham et al. 2002

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Subject **Competence and learning in late career** (Leif Lahn)

Outline

This presentation is based on the WORKTOW project, whose theme is 'changing working life and training of older workers'. We wanted to challenge the wide-spread belief that late career is a period of decline in work performance and in learning capacity. That is the very common picture of late career. Also we looked into the need of differentiating policy of human resource development, because it is an established fact that the individual variations and the contextual variations are going with increasing age. So that is also an argument for a more differentiated approach. At the macro-political level , when we started the project, there was quite a lot of discussion about keeping older people, also the tension and social implications. This was transformed in the course of the project to considering or developing this group of employees as a productive force. We may now ask again, looking at the reserve army, facing decline, maybe economic decline, depression.

We have been confronted with dilemmas: the mismatch between the well-documented competence and learning ability of the workers on the one side and the rising problem of early exits on the other side. The expertise of late career is more valuable because it has some of the characteristics of social competence, of wisdom. Also the number of physically demanding jobs is declining, so there should be an increasing acknowledgement of that kind of expertise. However, there is evidence of very early exit from working life. Nick Boreham was also referring to this (see contribution). There are those surveys on the working conditions in Europe, and we have also documented this in Norway: When it comes to restructuring in working life these are enormously costly in terms of health risk and of course in terms of motivation. Very often these pathologies are attributed to learning deficiencies and burn-out. So they are focusing on the negative aspects of late career, because there is evidence that some of these working conditions that are deteriorating may affect specifically the group over fifty.

I think we have to have a broader understanding of why we have this kind of results within the companies. For instance, there is this figure of intensification or the concept of intensificational work that could be a summary of many of the results here. This would also be understood as less ferocity within the working life because, for example, flexible measures of job rotation are misused because jobs are out-sources or they get slimmer, and that affects the learning opportunities in late career.

Also this question of attitudes to ICT and learning, with their negative effect especially when it comes to stereotypes about how older people learn or are not able to learn ICT. These are challenged by a lot of literature, but we find some very subtle mechanisms in this. When integrated technology is breaking down, some mechanism is that among young employees that kind of problem or bugs within a system are attributed correctly to the system, whereas with older workers those bugs are attributed to their own mental deficiency. That makes some kind of stereotype mechanism that we have to look into. We have to take up those features and facts about attitudes to get older workers motivated for involving themselves to learn, so that they can see they are able to learn. That could be some conclusion of my argument.

Reference Thesis: included in Manning 2002a; paper: Lahn 2002; final project report: Tikkanen et al. 2001

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Subject **Professionals as flexible workers or portfolio people** (Graham Guest)

Outline

My main thesis is that there are great changes taking place in the nature of work, learning and the development of organisations. These issues are the bases for a debate on how professionals need to adapt to flexible working and to develop portfolio careers.

The knowledge-society: Knowledge is a valuable asset and many companies are putting a lot of resources into devising methods of identifying and capturing it. For individuals wishing to survive and prosper in the modern world knowledge is vital. We are seeing a rapid increase in the number of so-called knowledge-workers: professionals who are highly committed to their own learning, development and personal growth.

Lifelong learning: It is considered normal for a person first to attend school and then to progress to university or college to gain a specific qualification. In many instances that qualification is still thought to be sufficient to serve the person for life. This was never really true, but now lifelong learning is increasingly being regarded as a necessity rather than an optional extra. Continuing professional development (CPD) is an important facet of such learning.

The virtual world: Information and communications technology (ICT) expands people's possibilities of working when, where and how they like. An office or other workplace need no longer be geographically based, but can be located throughout cyberspace. The professional association EurEta (European Higher Engineering and Technical Professionals Association), for instance, is a virtual organisation that operates through email, the internet and so on.

Networks: Professionals can be members of a number of different networks through which they carry out their work, learning and development. These networks, which can be physical or virtual, are fluid, flexible and highly responsive to change. Even traditional organisations are coming to recognise the benefits of operating as networked entities.

Self-development: Individuals can receive support for their lifelong learning and CPD from a number of sources, including their employer if they have one. But ultimately each person is responsible for his or her own self-development, which has both personal and professional aspects. To be fully effective such development must be clearly identified, planned, recorded and continually built upon.

The disappearance of the job: It has been said that there is no such thing any more as a job for life; as we go through life we fulfil many functions. It is more meaningful to talk about work rather than jobs, and our work can take different forms: paid, voluntary, purely for personal interest, and so on. Too often an individual professional has been identified solely in terms of his or her role or job, but such perceptions are changing.

Portfolio people: Flexible working patters and changes in the way we live are leading to the concept of a portfolio of work, for which the individual professional is responsible. Portfolio people have many loyalties, but if they are to be truly effective members of, and contributors to, the knowledge-society their first loyalty must be to themselves and their own personal and professional development. In effect they are one-person businesses.

Reference Thesis: included in Manning 2002a; paper: Guest 2002 (these two

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documents are focusing on the issue of portfolio people)

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Subject **Notion of 'flexible worker' challenging 'professional identity'**

Context The discussion summarised below is related to the presentations in block 1 of the symposium.

Discussion Participants: Nick Boreham, Martin Fischer, Graham Guest, Gerald Heidegger, Mike Kelleher, Jim Stewart

[MKe:] Nick, in his conclusions from the WHOLE project (see contribution), is particularly interested in the implications of power and control relationships and the implications for industrial relations on the European Commission's work and industry programme. Particularly interesting for me at least was: if all organisations are looking for flexible workers, what are the trade-offs and tensions?

[GH:] I would like to point out the fact that most of this debate is about modern industries and industry related services, which only employ about one quarter of the work population. When it comes to networking, Graham talked about virtual networks and people communicating with emails. Most workers do not communicate with emails, they are just selling and doing things like that. Therefore I think that we should always keep in mind that we are dealing with a minority of workers. And excuse me please, Nick, I think that your presentation was very much focused on those aspects which are certainly an important part of the economy which is relevant for international competition, but when we think about this occupational identity and the social meaning of work then we have to think about the vast majority of people.

[NB:] Just a quick point: I quite agree with that, nevertheless we have got to look at European vocational training policy. If you look at the European employment strategy it emphasises flexibility and adaptability as one of the major objectives. Employability is defined in terms of becoming more flexible, and the concept of key skills always stresses the idea of preparing people for flexible work. So I quite agree with what you say, but we have got to interrogate European vocational and HRD policies because they are based on an assumption that the future is going to be this very small sector.

[GG:] I would agree with that. As I said, my contribution was designed to be provocative and we need to take care to balance the concept of knowledge workers with people who are more involved with day-to-day practical activities. But it is worth noting that over 60 per cent of UK businesses have just one employee and that's the person running it. I have certainly seen more and more people working in a virtual context. Yes, but we must not get carried away, I agree.

[JiS:] Just one or two things not to get carried away about. A related term that has not been mentioned is that of employability, which is part of the trade-off for the employee to be more flexible. Some research I came across, conducted in Ireland, showed that where employability was emphasised by the employer as an attractive feature of working there, that is increasing employability with other employers, the consequence was that you had a high commitment to that employer on the part of the employees and a much lower likelihood of intention to leave. So in fact it was having the opposite effect that it was intended to have.

[MKe:] An issue addressed by Leif (see contribution) is that the learning capacity and the contribution of ageing workers is detrimental to organisations. At British Telecom, for instance, people at the age of 50

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have pensions and are no longer workers; some of them are actually pensioned off before the age of 50. It is assumed they can't make a contribution any more.
[MF:] In the title of this part of the programme the challenge of professional identity is mentioned. I thought that this is a particular German issue. So I would be interested to hear from you what your findings say about this topic: challenging professional identities.
[GG:] As well as working for EurEta I have a background of working for a professional institution in the UK. We spent a lot of time thinking about what that institution is for. Certainly in the UK, professional bodies were founded as gentlemen's clubs two centuries ago, where people would get together. They were men who would sit around discussing the latest developments of steam turbines or whatever. I think many of the professional bodies are still living in that sort of era, and they really have to look now at their relevance. If we go down the road of the portfolio concept what does it mean to have a profession, what does it mean to be an accountant, an engineer or whatever? So those structures I think are breaking down, but many professional bodies deny this.

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Subject **Organisational innovation and learning: Developmental work tasks** (Barry Nyhan)

Outline

Developmentally challenging work tasks are a prerequisite for implementing a learning organisation. This is one of the main messages arising from a CEDEFOP project under CEDRA (CEDEFOP Research Arena). We are looking at the Europeanisation issue in the same way as in the earlier discussion. The title of this message is one of the six or seven messages which are coming out of the project. The book 'Facing up to the learning organisation challenge - Volume I: Key issues from a European perspective' will be published in the coming months.

This concept of developmental work tasks means that work is organised in such a way that it promotes human development. In other words, it is about building work place environments in which people are motivated to think for themselves so that through their everyday work experiences they develop new competences and gain new understandings and insights. People are learning from their work, they are learning as they work. Developmental work is work which is inspiring learning, so developmental work promotes what Per-Erik Ellström has called developmental learning. The nature of the tasks is facilitating or compelling people to think. It is almost pushing people to learn. Now we realise, and this is linked to Nick's point (see contribution), that this is very complex.

Another aspect of learning at work which is very real, and which Per-Erik also uses in his taxonomy, is adaptive learning. Obviously a lot of work we are doing relates to routines. We are following procedures, obeying people. Maybe we often don't understand why we have to do something, but it has to be done. There is not a shared meaning across an organisation about why things are changing, so everybody starts complaining or whatever. But, there is a lot of adaptive learning, and people have to be able to cope with adaptive learning. The reality of adaptive learning means not glorifying developmental learning as the only kind of learning that takes place at work. But the key point is that if you are just merely adapting the whole time you are not creating a learning organisation in which people are developing the capacity to learn in this kind of evolutionary learning organisation.

The main message is the link between work in organisations, how work is organised, leading to the learning organisation. These cannot be seen as separate, so there must be radical changes in work organisations and how work is organised. And it is true for all of the people in the organisation at all the levels, not just management strategic learning. It is through all people participating in this kind of collective practice of working – that the developmental nature of practice will bring about developmental learning.

The final point is about the learning organisation concept. We shouldn't have an euphoric notion of what in reality is going to come about. We are talking about an imperfect learning organisation: perhaps an organisation is learning one year, and it stops learning next year, maybe Enron was learning 10 years ago! So organisations can stop learning, although parts of organisations may continue learning. The community of practice concept is about sub-groups and informal groups learning. Basically we are talking for most cases about compromise and unfinished work and things starting off and new hopes for this kind of learning organisation reality being generated.

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Subject **A package for integrated learning and development** (Jonathan Winterton)

Outline

What I want to do is to encourage people to read my paper. This draws on the LEONARDO project DEVELOP, which is now completed. It also draws on research on management development done for the Department of Education and Skills and the Inland Revenue in the UK in recent years. Further research on work organisation and human resource development has been displayed through the Academy of HRD and through the CEDRA network that Barry mentioned (see contribution). Finally this has resulted in a product, rather than simply a project, which has been taken up by a consulting firm known as Andorra.

The starting point is the learning organisation. The origin of the DEVELOP project was really the observation that, despite a lot of very useful models of learning organisations, the practical aspects of how do we establish the necessary conditions for learning and development in an organisation, there is very little about that, there is very little sort of concrete practical tools to do this. And that was the background to the project DEVELOP. The purpose was to establish a comprehensive framework for integrating learning and development in organisations, especially for raising competences at the intermediate skills level. I am using competence in a holistic sense to embody cognitive and functional competences as well as behavioural and meta-competences and psycho-social characteristics as well.

The second limb is really the management development. For us it is a useful starting point because, if you like the Matthias Principle that managers and other professionals typically enjoy very high participation in learning and development, much more certain than subordinates, and also because – a bit of an ideal case – the variety of routes and processes and ways in which managers learn, then the argument is: can management development which provides clues to good practice, can those good practice principles be applied to other employees, can they be generalised to other employees?

That then takes us to work organisations that I describe as anthropocentric, fit for human beings, but very much built on developing skills and giving autonomy to groups of workers. Through that we can actually develop forms of work organisation that enhance the opportunities of learning. So learning at work, learning through work as well as learning for work, that's the principle there. And a preliminary investigation of work places suggest that where skill and autonomy are developed at work they provide more routes to development as well as improving quality of working life and retention and all the rest of it.

So the project DEVELOP is really about building the conditions for learning organisation, for integrating work and development. We worked along a number of different learning domains. That's the area that Andorra has taken up, starting with the individual, moving to the team, moving to the organisation level, and dealing with the immediate needs, the future known needs, and the scary bit: the future unknown needs for most of the future. Finally, we put those together into this integrated learning and development framework, and the current policy context of lifelong learning provides the possibility of combining work place learning with broader learning and development in the community. It's really about bringing the conclusions of the Lisbon summit in March 2000, to create a European economy based on advanced skills and social inclusion, closer to reality.

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Subject **Working and learning practices in an oil refinery** (Nick Boreham)

Outline

I'd like to describe an example of integrating work and learning. This is an example drawn from a project which Martin Fischer is coordinating, called OrgLearn, organisational learning in the chemical industry. This is a study of an oil refinery in the UK. This company used to be a very traditional organisation, but it has now stated that it wishes to learn as an organisation. It has taken learning as an organisation as one of its core values with the aim of being the best oil refinery in Europe. What I wanted to describe was an initiative which they've just begun. This is an example of planned culture change, called Procedures and Competence Development Methodology. The aims here are basically to get the workforce to redefine the working processes, and as part of the redefinition of the working processes the workforce are expected to learn.

We have been carrying out studies for two years observing this and interviewing employees. Of course it's very innovatory that the new procedures are being written by the process operators. Previously in an oil refinery the procedures were written by chemical engineers in very senior positions. But the new procedures manual is being written by people who turn the valves and take the samples, the basic grade employees. What they go through is a very highly structured methodology. Essentially it consists of convening and meeting of all the employees who carry out a certain operation. There are five shifts, and typically there are five employees who do a certain task. These people are brought in and sit round the table, and they have to exchange information on how they do this one task. When they compare the different ways of doing it they have to decide on best practice. This is then written up by a set of operating procedures which become the operating procedures for that part of the refinery. There is something of an authorisation process in which what they recommend is put to senior management and the refinery technologists who check it for safety, but basically they don't change the whole procedure.

We did an interview with a refinery technologist, a highly qualified chemical engineer. He said he much prefers that the procedures are written by the workers who actually do the operations themselves. These in the UK are people with no formal qualifications whatsoever. This is essentially a learning process. We have investigated the way in which learning takes place in this context. Not only is there the exchange of information of best practice between the five operators who do the work, but in the process of doing the PCDM they involve many others employees in the plant in which they are operating. So there is a widespread lateral communication going on.

What is very significant is the change in the nature of work. Previously there was very little talk in the work place. You are coming to work, you are allocated a task and you do it on your own. Now everybody is talking very much about the best way of carrying out these various operations. So there is a massive increase in dialogue between workers at all levels, and this is generating knowledge and creating learning. There is also learning which goes up the hierarchy. Some of the procedures which have been developed have been discussed with senior management as part of the authorisation process. That has created a dialogue between management and operators about the best way to run the plant. This has led to in fact a project to re-engineer the plant. The refinery technologists are actually learning form the process operators who, I repeat, have no

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qualifications in engineering. So it does seem that there has been a normalisation of a culture of learning in this particular context.

My problem is this: in the UK there is a debate on organisational learning by educationalists. These people are very critical of the concept of organisational learning. They say it is not authentic learning because it is firstly instrumental and secondly because there is no autonomy to the learner. On the basis of these observations my own conclusion, having listened to the voice of the workers involved, is that they are more empowered than they were previously and that there is genuine learning that is taking place here. However I am having some difficulty in convincing the educational community in the UK that this is authentic learning.

Reference Thesis: included in Manning 2002a

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Subject **Gender specific key qualifications for working life** (Gerald Heidegger)

Outline This is based on a project within the Fifth Framework Programme which is called 'gender and qualifications: transcending gender features of key qualifications for improving options for career choice and enhancing human resource potential' (GENDERQUAL). The last word was I think the reason why we have been invited here. For the project the idea is that there is a dialectical relationship between improving individual options for career choice on the one hand and enhancing human resource potential on the other. Because we think that if everybody has improved chances of career choice then also the societal human resource potential will be improved.

The idea of the GENDERQUAL project is not to pretend the so-called sameness, that quality means sameness, that men and women are the same, or that they should be treated equally. We have generated, I'm not sure whether it was us, we use at least the term 'gender autonomy', which is directly related to this idea of improving individual options for career choice. In our project we research into the fields of electricians, a so-called male dominated occupation; nursery nurses is a female dominated occupation; and bakers or waitresses is a more mixed occupation. The idea is not that there should be equal numbers of men and women, but the idea is gender autonomy, that a woman who wants to become an electrician should not be hindered so much as she is nowadays. And to come back to the theme of our workshop here, it is thought that this will also improve human resource potential because it puts the right people at the right place.

A second aspect is that this is not a project just about women and the improvement of their chances. We are working on an intermediate level of qualifications, and at least at the lower level it is nowadays the men who have sometimes less chances. This is because young women are doing better at school, as you know, and hard manual labour is almost disappearing, which was the type of working place for low-achieving young males. So we are thinking implicitly about how to open up new career opportunities for men which had been closed to them, often by way of stigmatisation, a mixture of self-stigmatisation and stigmatisation by others. A typical example are men in the occupation of nursery nurses: they themselves feel a little bit strange sometimes, but also their female colleagues find it sometimes a bit strange that they are there.

Reference Thesis: included in Manning 2002a; paper: Heidegger et al. 2002 (including gender aspects of learning and acquiring qualifications)

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EHRD **Highlight** **Symposium: The European perspective of HRD**

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Subject **Integrating work and learning in organisations**

Context The discussion summarised below is related to the presentations in block 2 of the symposium.

Discussion Participants: Nick Boreham, Alan Brown, Leif Lahn, Martin Mulder, Barry Nyhan, Jim Stewart, Jonathan Winterton

[JW:] I haven't before conferred with Nick, but it's firstly sharing his view on the reality gap between the work place and education, or education and the work place perhaps, and secondly also similar experience in a chemicals plant. There we brought about some changes which led to a very high commitment to learning. Interestingly, these workers, also very low qualified, no qualification at all: the employer was reluctant to qualify them, for fear of loosing them, but they got qualified to VQ level 3 (operator control) and of course labour retention was much improved as a result. So it's exactly the opposite, just a kind of very similar experience.

[JiS:] I have a comment on the presentations in the form of two questions to the critics from education. The first is: what's wrong with instrumentality? The second is: Could you give some examples of non-instrumental learning?

[NB:] My reply is that university and secondary education is a lot more instrumental than training and qualifying.

[LL:] Just a comment on Barry's point on learning organisation (see contribution). I obviously agree that this will be a kind of normative model of connection between the learning organisation and developmental work. But I think also it should be attentive to other functions of these kinds of ideas and slogans. Slogans like this are also used by companies. For example, I have been looking at very traditional parts of Norwegian industry and retailing. There they also use that kind of language to attract what they call the young and bright, and of course to kick out the old. In this sense they use the learning organisation rhetoric as a way of introducing new training for apprentices and trainees, and do not look at the developmental potentialities of their own group. So I think we should look at the descriptive power of this concept.

[BNy:] I think that this whole learning organisation and all modern forms of learning have been contaminated by a lot of empty slogans and catch phrases that have been used for all sorts of reasons which are not learning related at all. But all our words can be abused. Leif used the word 'wisdom'. I think there was a technology person recently, an American talking to the European Commission on the technology people, who was saying "we are no longer selling knowledge; people now want to buy wisdom, they want experience rather than hard products; rich Americans now don't want to buy holiday in Hawaii, they want to drive a tank into the wide desert, they want wisdom, experience...". So all these words, information, knowledge, wisdom – every good concept is going to be abused for different reasons.

[MM:] An important message that comes out of this discussion is that for us as HRD researchers it is very important to look at practice really within the industrial organisations; there is so much theory and slogans...

[AB:] I'd like to make a couple of mixed points about learning. I think it is less a matter for engagement with educational researchers than engagement more generally with the sort of educational systems. I've

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done some work on learning in organisations across supply chains, and exactly the same thing: operators teach managers and so on, fantastic amount of learning, but it is at a point at which people are interested in that. It's interesting though that the interest is coming from the Department of Trade and Industry, rather than from the Department for Education and Skills, because they still are attached to the sort of qualifications and achievement of learning tasks. One of the most interesting things about the work in the supply chains was that there is a fantastic amount of learning going on if supported by people like educational researchers or other researchers; a lot was achieved. And when it turned to what sort of use they want to make of that, in terms of vocational qualifications or credits within the formal educational system, the majority of people wanted neither because they said "I possess these skills, I had that learning, I'm recognised within my organisation". It was the educational organisations which had difficulty in coping with that: management schools and people like that saying "we've got to turn this into something". I think it is less of a challenge for us, because within educational research there is a strong element of people actually looking into this. But I think it does present far greater challenges to our educational institutions because they want to get their hands on it.

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Subject **Organisational learning and knowledge sharing in the chemical industry** (Martin Fischer)

Outline

In the project OrgLearn we empirically investigate processes of organisational learning in four large chemical companies in Italy, Belgium, Germany and the UK. We try to find out what those companies which claim to be learning companies really do. I must admit I was rather sceptical, but we have found some interesting cases of organisational learning. I've brought such a case with me, similar to the case which Nick already described (see contribution).

In the chemical industry the knowledge which is being stored in plant manuals and standard operating procedures is very important, it's crucial. Usually that kind of knowledge is being produced by engineers, but in many companies we investigated the workers had their own little booklets. In the Belgian company from our consortium for instance there is a tradition that each worker has a little grey booklet where the knowledge is being documented what to do in different critical situations. So this kind of knowledge is really important. In our case of organisational learning the German company decided to produce such a plant manual with the help of the workforce. Teams were set up, with one experienced worker, one novice and steered by an external chair person. Those teams had three to four weeks time to produce the operation manual for one unit of a technical plant. So within two and a half years time all the workforce together produced 35 single folders describing the plant and describing what to do in a critical situation. This operation manual is linked to the wage system. Workers can pass an examination and raise in salary if they prepare this examination with the help of the operation manual. This case has been described in detail in my paper.

I am coming to the conclusions now. Some of them have already been discussed by Alan Brown (see discussion).

- In the case which I described the emphasis lies in the provision of an organisational structure for knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. The knowledge to be created and shared is what we call work process knowledge. It's knowledge about the whole labour process within a factory, including reflections on practical and theoretical knowledge which might be used for work.
- There is in that case an increase of self-organised learning and a reduction of personal controlling and of determining learning processes by masters and foremen, which was the case in former times. Now these workers can pass this examination independently from the masters and foremen.
- The content of learning is oriented towards the running of the plant combined to some extent with career opportunities. The content of learning is not oriented towards job descriptions and to the range of vocational competencies which are defined by the German Beruf. That is the thing which Alan mentioned. Processes of organisational learning were among others like health and safety regulations stimulated by a remarkable reduction of personnel and a loss of experienced workers. Organisational learning can be regarded as an attempt to compensate the loss of know-how.
- Knowledge which formerly belonged to the individual worker or a group of individuals is objectified in two ways: it is objectified

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through a process of generalising individual knowledge and it is objectified through artefacts – this operation manual by which knowledge can be stored in a memory of the organisation.

- It is not yet clear to what extent organisational learning may support an outsourcing-and-insourcing policy and to what extent the individual worker benefits from processes of organisational learning he is involved in, especially if he is leaving the company.

Reference Thesis: included in Manning 2002a; paper: Fischer et al. 2002

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Subject **Organisational innovation and learning: Challenges for the actors**
(Barry Nyhan)

Outline The other thesis which comes out of the work we have been doing (see contribution) is that the implementation of learning organisations raises serious challenges for vocational education and training and human resource development actors. The issues here are that organisational learning is something outside of the vocabulary of many people in education. Education is more about individual learning, qualifications and formal systems, so the concept of dealing with this chaotic organisational learning is something that for a lot of professionals in VET and also to a certain extent in HRD, is a challenge. For people engaged in the VET system, which is a rather complex system to start with and very heterogeneous, in future there has to be much more focus on engaging with untidy social environmental learning, where we have lots of complex relationships, complex ways of teaching, illustrated by what Nick was talking about (see contribution) and Alan came up with (see discussion).

So there is this kind of rediscovery of all sorts of unanticipated learning. Learning is often taking place outside the training department. This raises issues about interdisciplinarity and boundary crossing between the world of VET and HRD. These two groups of people are often grouped together, but they have very different value systems and different practices and different interests. So the interconnectivity between these two groups in a pragmatic and not an ideological type of dialogue, which it often turns into, is an issue to be addressed. The whole business of developing social learning systems outside of the school system, like learning organisations in industry, but also in community systems, in educational and public systems, that's another issue to be addressed.

Also, just a comment on the role of researchers. There is a tendency among researchers – even though Alan Brown spoke about a different kind of dimension where the researchers are the innovators (see discussion) – but there is a tendency among researchers to just adopt a purely critical role of being able to deconstruct what's going on. This is purely objectivist, a strong tradition of research: the researcher has to be detached from the question that is being researched. But there is another minor tradition which is for the researchers to be advocates. This dispels the neutrality of research which is a big debate and hotly contested issue. This entails researchers working with practitioners being a kind of critical reflector, being on the same side rather than just knocking the many failures that are going to take place when people engage in complex challenges like changing the way learning takes place.

Finally, and this is just a comment I heard from a Dutch expert in knowledge management. He was referring to all those 'gurus' who come in to a knowledge based company. They are not going to the HRD people, nor to the VET people. They are creating another world of interconnectedness, they are talking to some other strategic planners in the organisation. So it's a different concept of knowledge, of learning. The HRD people in this context are not participating in this new way in which knowledge is developed. There is an issue about a repositioning and reintegration of what I would call European values. I would be a strong advocate for the German Beruf concept as giving people a certain security in a chaotic social system. But obviously one has to be open to realities rather than holding on to something that cannot resist the inevitable change that is going to take place.

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Reference	Thesis: included in Manning 2002a; paper: Nyhan et al. 2002
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Highlight **Symposium: The European perspective of HRD**

Subject **Knowledge sharing as both managerial and participatory approach**

Context The discussion summarised below is related to the presentations in block 3 of the symposium.

Discussion Participants: Gerald Heidegger

I am obliged to say something if Barry (see contribution) talks about the German Beruf concept. The interesting thing is that despite all what has been said about flexibilisation and portfolio persons and so on, the German Beruf has not been weakened, it has been strengthened. In quantitative terms – one has to be careful about that I admit – but in quantitative terms it has never been as strong as nowadays. The relative number of apprentices has risen during the last few years and has surpassed 70 per cent of the cohort. We should keep that in mind.

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Subject **Final note on the debate across issues** (Jim Stewart)

Outline

We had three issues in three blocks, so I'm going to continue to the theme of three and have three caveats and three observations. The caveats are first of all that I read the theses before and prepared my observations on that basis. Most of the speakers have faithfully stuck to what they wrote, some less so, but my observations are more a response to what they wrote than what they said; I haven't had enough time to think about and analyse their verbal presentations. The second caveat is: each of the issues is highly complex in its own right, and trying to find common links is a serious challenge. That leads to the third caveat: because of the first two don't expect any wisdom or startling insights, although hopefully my three observations will be of some interest and use and relevance and validity in relation to what has been said.

The first observation is that human resource development clearly has a continuing role in identity construction. I think that has been apparent across the three issues and across the three blocks. I could mention a couple of examples, but that would be to simplify the commonality. So, human resource development is perhaps not critical but certainly significant in the construction of individual identities, not just in relation to professional identity but as I think has been pointed out, the whole person, the whole identity of which professional identity is obviously only one part.

The second observation is that human resource development is and continues to be significant in creating new forms of organisation. So human resource development has an organisational focus as well as an individual focus. What I think has been implicit in several contributions and what I'd like to make explicit is the continuing tension between those two levels, those two foci for human resource development: how do we within human resource development reconcile organisational requirements with individual, personal requirements? If I just for this purpose refer to one paper specifically, which was Nick's first contribution. He mentioned that organisations are social systems for the distribution of various things. He mentioned three; responsibilities, rewards and knowledge. Organisations are social systems for the distribution of power too. I personally think that human resource development tends to avoid that issue, that word. But if it is to make progress in reconciling or matching the needs of individuals and organisations it has to get to grips with the distribution of power within organisations.

My third and final observation is that the session confirms various and contrasting strands to European perspectives of HRD. If I change the word to models I can say that models – again using the number three – can be of three different types: they can be descriptive, they can be analytical and they can be normative. My sense from all the contributions is that if we were to produce a prescriptive, or normative, model for human resource development in Europe it would have to have a person centred and developmental approach and purpose. So perhaps the business case for the European model for human resource development would be that – to take Barry's comment (see contribution) on European values – the core values would be person centred and developmentally oriented. Thank you.

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ECER 2002 Symposium The European perspective of HRD

Theses

Contributions to the panel discussion in three successive blocks:

(a) Issue: Notion of 'flexible worker' challenging 'professional identity'

Moderator: Mike Kelleher

Contributions:

(a1) Developing flexibility in pursuit of competitiveness (Boreham)

(a2) Competence and learning in late career (Lahn)

(a3) Professionals as flexible workers or portfolio people (Guest)

(b) Issues: Integrating work and learning in organisations/

Shift from skill building to performance improvement and competence development

Moderator: Martin Mulder

Contributions:

(b1) Organisational innovation and learning <I> (Nyhan & Kelleher)

(b2) A package for integrated learning and development (Winterton)

(b3) Working and learning practices in an oil refinery (Boreham)

(b4) Gender specific key qualifications for working life (Kampmeier)

(c) Issue: Knowledge sharing as both managerial and participatory approach

Moderator: Mike Kelleher

Contributions:

(c1) Organisational learning and knowledge sharing in the chemical industry (Fischer)

(c2) Organisational innovation and learning <II > (Nyhan & Kelleher)

The theses attached below follow the order of the panel discussio n. They have been compiled as provided by (or agreed with) the authors without any editing.

(a1)

Developing flexibility in pursuit of competitiveness

Nicholas Boreham

The TSER project Work Process Knowledge in Technological and Organizational Development ('WHOLE', 1998-2000) investigated changes in European manufacturing and services, focussing on the ways of knowing needed to work in the new forms of organi zation that are emerging. The changes under investigation are connected with the transition from fixed systems of production or service delivery towards more flexible kinds of organization, involving inter alia reducing vertical and horizontal demarcations , replacing functional departments by multi-functional business units, introducing more teamwork, developing broader vocational qualifications and engaging all employees in continuous improvement initiatives. The current industrial policies of the European Commission and most member states are based on the assumption that flexible organizations of this kind are more likely to compete successfully in the global economy. The WHOLE project did not assume that change in this direction is taking place universally, nor even that it is desirable. Nevertheless, in many sectors there is considerable evidence of a trend towards more flexible ways of organizing work.

Several examples of flexibility are discussed in the project publication Work Process Knowledge ed. Boreham, N., Samurçay and Fischer, M. London: Routledge 2002. One example is Michele Mariani's study of an Italian chemical company. In response to competition from non-European countries with lower wage costs, this company reduced the proportion of manufacturing in its portfolio and increased the development of new chemical and technological processes that could be licenced to other companies. In order to discover new processes, the company has had to implement a more flexible way of organizing its work. Instead of manufacturing a fixed product range indefinitely, plant are now used to experiment with new chemical processes and the production processes needed to manufacture the new substances thus made possible. Once a process has been developed to the point when it can be patented, or is found to have no commercial application, the plant is decommissioned and re-engineered to embark on a new experiment. The teams of employees operating the plant have in consequence to be very flexible. An experiment may run for a little as three or four weeks before the production team is disbanded and re-employed in new teams working on new processes.

The WHOLE project explored the concept of work process knowledge as an essential knowledge requirement for working in flexible organizations such as this chemical company. Work process knowledge is defined as an understanding of the work process in the organisation as a whole – including the overall production process and the overall labour process. In Taylorist organisations, each basic grade employee only needs sufficient underpinning knowledge to carry out his or her narrow job, and rarely needs to understand what happens in other parts of the organisation. However, in the kinds of flexible organisation where individuals work in multi-functional units and teams, and are expected to adopt new procedures in support of continuous improvement, understanding the work process in the organization as a whole is an essential requirement.

The competitive advantages of a flexible workforce have been widely discussed. However, the implication of sharing work process knowledge throughout the whole organization has received less attention. A firm may be viewed as an agreement between different interest groups on the sharing of power, burdens and remuneration between its members. The distribution of knowledge about the work process is an essential term in this equation. Any change in the distribution of work process knowledge may disturb the equilibrium of interests that has been established. For example, the transition from an organization where knowledge of the work process is restricted to management to one where such knowledge is not only shared openly, but even becomes the focus of participatory work redesign initiatives, will increase the power of the workers and reduce that of middle management and supervisors. Changes in power relations of this kind will not be accepted easily. Industrial relations thus become central to the European industrial modernization project. The studies carried out within the WHOLE project reveal considerable difficulties in building new organizational structures based on sharing knowledge of the work process, caused by the resulting changes in the power structure of companies and the resistance of certain social groups in the face of this change.

(a2)

Competence and learning in late career. European perspectives on the management of motivation

Leif Chr. Lahn

My presentation is based on a 4th Framework project called "Working life changes and the training of older workers" (WORKTOW) with partners in the UK, Finland and Norway – and associated activities in the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Italy. We challenged the wide-spread belief in late career as a period of decline in work performance and learning capacity. Also the need for a differentiated policy of HRD was highlighted since individual and contextual variations are growing with increasing age. A third challenge was located at the macro-political level where a change in strategy took place in many European countries – from keeping the older workers out of burdening pension and social security budgets to one that promotes the productive potential of this group in labour markets where expertise is a scarce resource. In short - from a policy of detainment to one of competence development.

Given this institutional and social ecology my suggestion here is to move issues of occupational motivation into the centre of European perspectives on HRD. I will give a few reasons for such a proposal:

- The mismatch between the well-documented competence and learning ability of older workers on the one hand and the rising problem of early exit in Europe. It is intensified by the increasing relevance of social competence and "wisdom" in modern working life, whereas the number of physically demanding jobs is going down. The crucial factor has to do with motivational and attitudinal issues – among older workers and younger workers, employers and policy makers.

- There is a growing evidence of the enormous human costs that are associated with the flexibilitisation of European working life. Very often these pathologies are attributed to learning deficiencies, resistance to change, burn -out – thus focusing on the negative aspects of late career and older workers. What is left out is a broader understanding of socio-cultural differences in work commitment, occupational values and identity formation.

- The attractiveness of "boundaryless careers" is often taken for granted since it accords with prevailing ideologies of individual preferences and contractual relations as main pillars. In this context late career becomes a problem – in need of corrective measures. However such a discourse may not adequately reflect realities and beliefs in a European

context where differences in career patterns may be regulated by national regimes like the "welfare state", professional bodies, regional and community-based systems – rather than by the hidden hand of the market. So again motivation, work values and identity formation may be more relevant than learning per se.

- Finally. If we shift the research agenda from learning and knowledge creation to motivation at work, we must also question the predominance of psychological theories and models that often are transported across th e Atlantic. European perspectives have often a clearer socio-cultural foundation for understanding commitment at work and occupational identity formation.

(a3)

Professionals as flexible workers or portfolio people

Graham Guest

Over recent years many new organisational models have appeared: for example the learning organisation (Senge, 1990) and the centerless corporation (Pasternack and Viscio, 1998). Now the very concept of an organisation is being challenged and we are seeing the rapid growth of networks (Hutton, 2001).

In a networked world individuals no longer have long-term relationships with single organisations, but carry out projects and assignments as members of different groups. Handy (2001) calls these individuals portfolio people. They operate in a world in which the model of the "cathedral", with its clearly defined but restrictive hierarchies, is giving way to that of the more chaotic yet freer environment of the "bazaar" (Raymond, 1999).

As professionals portfolio people have many loyalties, but if they are to be truly effective members of, and contributors to, the knowledge-society their first loyalty must be to themselves. In effect they are one-person businesses, increasingly using the latest information and communications technologies to allow them to operate in a virtual world. In Britain over 60 per cent of all registered businesses have no employees, only the owner (Handy, 2001).

Portfolio people need to be flexible within their working and personal lives. For many such people the concept of work-life balance is meaningless because their work is firmly integrated into the rest of their lives. This new scenario has implications for social provision, since portfolio people are less likely to retire in the traditional sense. It also raises questions about professional identity. In the days when a person could expect a job for life this identity was clearly defined. Now professionals find themselves taking on different roles throughout their lives.

As for education and training, a single professional qualification is still too often thought to be sufficient to serve a person for life. In a networked world however it is lifelong learning, including personal and professional development, that is the key to prosperity and well-being. Responsibility for this again lies with the individual professional, for whom it is yet another aspect of his or her portfolio.

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(b1)

Organisational innovation and learning:

Developmental/ challenging work tasks are a prerequisite for implementing a learning organisation

Barry Nyhan (Cedefop), Peter Cressey (University of Bath), Massimo Tomassini (ISFOL), Michael Kelleher (Learning Futures Ltd.) and Rob Poell (University of Nijmegen).

The key to promoting learning organisations is to organise work in such a way that it promotes human development. In other words it is about building workplace environments in which people are motivated to think for themselves so that through their everyday work experiences, they develop new competences and gain new understanding and insights. Thus, people are learning from their work - they are learning as they work.

This entails building organisations in which people have what can be termed 'developmental work tasks'. These are challenging tasks that 'compel' people to stretch their potential and muster up new resources in managing demanding situations. In carrying out 'developmental work tasks' people are 'developing themselves' and are thus engaged in what can be termed 'developmental learning'. They are developing their own work-related knowledge rather that merely adapting to the commands, rules or procedures laid down by others. Although the latter behaviour is not unimportant and is indeed an essential aspect of working life, it promotes 'adaptive learning' rather than 'developmental learning' .

'Developmental work', therefore, is a prerequisite for 'developmental learning' . This learning takes place through sharing in the 'life' of organisations that are undertaking 'developmental work'. It is through participating in, contributing to, and reflecting on the interactions taking place in those types of organisations, that dev elopmental learning occurs. In other words one learns from and through the collective 'practice' that one is participating in. This is learning through participating in a 'community of practice'. In this process, people are also actively contributing towards constructing and sustaining this 'community of practice' through transforming every day social interactions into an effective and productive collaborative system.

(b2)

A package for integrated learning and development

Jonathan Winterton

The thesis derives from Leonardo project DEVELOP (January 1997-December 1999), which designed a learning organization package for integrated learning and development in organizations. The argument is that to build the conditions for a learning organization (defined here as one in which learning and development is an integral part of work), learning must take place in a number of domains, representing different levels (individual, team and organization) and different needs (immediate, future known and future unknown).

The starting point is learning at the individual level to meet the immediate business needs for basic occupational competence. Competence is used here in a holistic sense, to include both cognitive and functional competences and behavioural and meta-competencies (Winterton, 2001). Building from this point, individual learning must be advanced to meet the organization's future needs that are known, through what Hendry et al (1995: 143-5) term extended occupational learning and learning from job context, to achieve extended occupational competence. Further learning of new occupational skills (Hendry et al, 1995: 149) beyond the foreseeable needs of the organization leads the individual to what Senge (1990: 142-3) describes as 'personal mastery', and represents progression towards the organization's future needs that are unknown.

Once individuals have achieved basic occupational competence, team learning can be developed to meet the immediate needs of the organization, drawing on the synergies of individual learning and focusing on developing team competence. The attainment of team competence to meet immediate needs and extended occupational competence of individual team members in line with future predicted needs, provides the foundations for developing team competences to meet the organization's predictable future needs. Action learning can provide a route to operationalise collective learning through the creation of new team routines in the same way that individual learning can precipitate organizatio nal action (March and Olsen, 1975). Team learning can progress to address areas that may constitute future unknown needs once individual team members are working towards personal mastery.

Finally, at the level of the organization as a whole, learning can be promoted between teams to meet immediate needs, provided the necessary foundations at team and individual level have been accomplished. It is futile to attempt to introduce a framework for a learning organization without establishing the foundations a t the level of individuals and teams. Once

these building blocks are in place and shared mental models emerge, the organizational culture is sufficiently altered to permit learning to be transferred upwards and outwards, while development increasingly focuses on the organization's future known needs. The broad trajectory proposed to build a learning organization involves progressively addressing the learning domains associated with higher levels and further needs of the organization.

(b3)

Working and Learning Practices in an Oil Refinery

Nicholas Boreham

This contribution is based on work carried out for the Framework V project ORGLEARN (Organizational Learning in the Chemical Industry and the Implications for Vocational Education and Training).

The UK study focuses on an oil refinery which has adopted the aim of becoming a 'learning organization'. The refinery's mission statement says that learning as an organisation is one of the ways in which it will achieve its aim of becoming 'the best refinery in Europe'. It emphasises the need to learn as a company from past mistakes and successes , and to openly share knowledge and learning within the com pany.

The refinery has implemented a number of initiatives designed to achieve these goals, which the research team has been studying for two years by (1) desk research into current state of the chemicals industry, (2) key informant interviews about the refinery's organisational learning policies and their implementation, (3) observations in control rooms, laboratories and in the field, (4) interviewing 30 employees about their experience of the organizational learning initiatives, (5) interpreting the findings through dialogue with company staff individually and in two workshops.

One current initiative is called Procedures and Competence Development Methodology (PCDM). The objectives are to identify best practice in operating procedures (such as bringing a new pump on line), write standard operating procedures (SOPs) embodying the best practice, and to use this as a way of promoting learning in the workplace. The innovatory aspect of PCDM is that the SOPs are being written by the process operators who actu ally carry out the work in question, not by management or other senior staff (who wrote the previous generation of SOPs).

Although originally intended to generate a revised set of SOPs, the company is now using PCDM primarily as a way of developing compe tence. The data gathered indicate that this initiative is promoting organisational learning as defined by Argyris and Schön (1996:16) . In contrast to the situation which obtained before, there is now a horizontal dialogue among the process operators on di fferent shifts in which they debate best practice, and a two- way dialogue with management and refinery technologists about the best way to carry out operations in the plants. Overall, there has been a significant shift from an individualistic to a collecti ve work culture, and learning appears to be firmly embedded in the work process.

A significant finding is that the concept of competence embedded in the working and learning practice studied here is has changed from what prevailed before. When the compan y had a traditional hierarchical structure with demarcations and fixed procedures, the prevailing concept of competence was personal, tacit and specialised. Now that the company is a learning organization, the prevailing concept of competence is changing t o one that is collective, codified and generalist.

Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1996) Organisational Learning II: Theory, Method and Practice . Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley

(b4)

Gender specific key qualifications for working life

Gerald Heidegger, Anke S. Kampmeier, Beatrix Niemeyer

The awareness for gender issues must generally be raised to draw the attention to necessary but also to non-necessary gender specifications of competencies and in jobs and occupations.

The aim is not to judge or to put all on equal terms, but to make generally aware of individuality and gender issues.

We neither want to pretend that men and women are equal or want them to be treated equally, nor do we want to emphasise the differences so that the gap between me n and women and their actions becomes larger. What we are asking instead is that they learn from each other and take over those things that appeal to them, no matter whether mal or female, and to develop those further in the sense of mutual learning.

Above that it should be noted that "male" and "female" competencies always refer to an artificial "average" person. Everybody will display more or less male or female features with respect to different dimensions of competencies. People should be supported in developing their strengths, regardless of their sex. One should try to avoid "reducing" them to the presupposed "average" or "typical" woman or man.

(c1)

Organisational learning and knowledge sharing in the chemical industry

Martin Fischer

The concept of organisational learning as differentiated from individual learning is often lacking of theoretical clarification and empirical evidence. This contribution presents findings from the 5th FP project OrgLearn, i.e. results of an empirical investigation into processes of organisational learning in large chemical companies within 4 European countries. One essential content of measures for organisational learning found in our empirical investigation are methods of knowledge sharing and knowledge management. In particular, a case study from Germany is presented which describes both a managerial and a participatory approach.

This case study describes the participative production of the operations manual for running the chemical plant. The enterprise was intensely confronted with the impact of the company's policy of promoting job cuts using early retirement arrangements – the loss of experience and know-how in the shift teams due to the loss of experienced workers. In order to counteract this loss of knowledge and experience, a project was launched in 1998 in collaboration with the training division that envisages the participative production of an operations manual for all process stages of that plant. The operations manual became a kind of organisational memory for a major proportion of the know-how essential for operating the plant. It became the central basis of a skilling system and was linked to the salary system.

Drafting and editing the operations manual for the steam cracker is organisationally controlled. At regular intervals, a team comprising one beginner, an experienced worker and a chair person meet in a container near the workplace and draft the description for a particular process stage. Normally every team has 3 up to 4 weeks to write their chapter. The manual explains how each process stage functions, how it is operated and which safety instructions must be complied with. The team is also responsible for producing exemplary questions for each qualification level. During the production process an intensive discussion about the function of and the operation of the plant takes place. Direct participation of shift workers ensures that the manual can easily be understood. Especially novices use this manual intensively who are extremely motivated due to the link between learning (respectively the success of learning) and the salary system. Because of the work-oriented content of the operations manual it is particularly used whenever work at a specific process unit has to be envisaged. As it is exactly described in the manual how a process unit is

structured, and, first of all, how it has to be operated in particular situations, novi ces are able to prepare their work well with the help of the handbook.

Producing and updating the operations manual, as well as integrating it into the process of skilling workers, must be interpreted as an organisational learning process. Previously, the process of skilling shift workers primarily depended on the initiative of shift foremen and experienced shift workers. The organisational process of preparing and updating the operations manual implies that an important part of the knowledge of employees is added to the organisational 'memory'. The skilling system, linked as it is to the payments system, provides organisational processes for distributing the knowledge stored in the various documents comprising the operations manual.

Preliminary conclusions

The development and use of knowledge within a company has always been a cause for dispute in regards to its usefulness for the individual or the company respectively. The concept of the learning organisation interprets this dispute anew. Our findings lead to preliminary conclusions as follows:

- The case described meet the criteria 1 – 4 of organisational learning which were suggested in the theoretical framework of the OrgLearn project:

1) Organisational work routines are being evaluated and improved.

2) Formal and informal learning processes are being evaluated and improved.

3) Transformations are occurring in the culture of the organisation.

4) Knowledge is being created within the organisation, at different levels (not only by the managers/scientists) and it is being shared within the organisation.

- In the case described the main emphasis lies in the provision of an organisational structure for knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. The knowledge to be created and shared is what we call work process knowledge: knowledge about the whole labour process within the factory including reflection on practical and theoretical knowledge that might be useful for work.

- There is an increase of self-organised learning and a reduction of personally controlling and determining learning processes by masters and foremen. Learning processes are on one hand more independent from personal control (by middle managers), on the other hand more objectified through manuals, procedures and regulations, however not eliminating partial self-organisation. The content of learning is oriented towards the running of the plant, combined to some extent with career opportunities. The content of learning is not oriented

towards job descriptions and the range of vocational competencies w hich are defined by the German "Beruf".

- Processes of organisational learning were stimulated by a remarkable reduction of personnel and a loss of experienced workers. Organisational learning can be regarded as an attempt to compensate the loss of know-how. Knowledge which formerly belonged to the individual worker or a group of individuals is objectified in two ways: It is objectified through a process of generalising individual knowledge and it is objectified through artefacts – means by which knowledge can be stored in a "memory" of the organisation. It is not yet clear to what extent organisational learning may support an outsourcing-and-insourcing policy and to what extent the individual worker benefits from processes of organisational learning he is involved in, especially if he is leaving the company.

(c2)

Organisational innovation and learning:

The implementation of learning organisations raises serious challenges for vocational education and training and human resource development actors

Barry Nyhan (Cedefop), Peter Cressey (University of Bath), Massimo Tomassini (ISFOL), Michael Kelleher (Learning Futures Ltd.) and Rob Poell (University of Nijmegen).

The wide and complex notion of learning that is implied in the concept of the learning organisation draws attention to issues that are normally considered to be outside of the realm of education and training, such as how organisations are designed, developed and managed. Indeed, the very concept of 'organisational learning' is foreign to the vocabulary of most of those involved in vocational education and training, for whom learning is very much a formal, individualistic matter. But, it is argued that vocational education and training must engage more with learning in untidy social environments in, for example, small enterprises and in different sorts of socio-economic 'real-life' contexts. This is a more complex and unstructured form of learning dealing with the relationships between organisational innovation, technological development, business strategies and the harnessing the skills and winning the commitment of everybody involved. Organisational learning is about applied learning and supporting 'practices' where 'non-professional learning' actors – managers and team leaders – promote learning while people are working. All of the professional education and training actors concerned with the business of work-related learning have to rethink their positions to respond to the challenge of organisational learning. This entails a re -evaluation of vocational education and training but also human resource development practices and strategies.

In addressing the organisational learning agenda there is also the need to examine how those representing the respective fields of vocational education and training (VET) and human resource development (HRD) can learn from each other and cooperate with each other. Whereas VET - in line with its public sector role - is at the intersection between peoples' concept of their individual professional or occupational identity within society and their organisational roles within companies, HRD is focusing more on promoting the effectiveness of people within particular companies. Likewise, whereas HRD has more of a bias towards management development for business effectiveness, VET is more concerned with the needs of intermediate level workers. Also, the traditional obligations of VET tend to be restricted to foundation level professional/vocational education ('initial vocational

education and training') and not so much 'continu ing vocational education and training' throughout one's working life.

In the context of promoting a European learning economy (See Lundvall)or and Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality there is a need for radical thinking about how VET and HRD can interconnect with each other. This calls for boundary crossing and mutual learning in a 'social partnership' mode leading to a realignments of respective roles in addressing a much wider and more complex learning agenda in which change is introduced in a bottom up and pragmatic fashion and not in accordance with some grand 'top-down' theoretical or ideological framework. The position adopted by research professionals within VET and HRD cannot be a purely objectivist and detached but rather must take on the form of an engagement with policy makers and actors in jointly building new constructs.

Another and perhaps more important point that needs to be taken up is the fact that in the more innovative organisations focusing on 'knowledge-value-added' products and services, the HRD and education and training departments in these companies are tending to miss out on key organisational debates about knowledge development and knowledge management strategies. This can be seen as 'wake-up call' for HRD professionals, in particular, to begin to address more the 'intangible' dimension of an organisation where knowledge (or intellectual and social capital) cannot be pinned down in line with traditional learning or training classifications, but is distributed throughout the heads of the different people who are creating and/or 'holding' it.

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Resource base of a research project cluster related to human resource development in Europe (EHRD Base)

Accompanying Measure within the Fifth Framework Programme of the EU

Contract No HPHA-CT2000-00053 (1 June 2001 to 30 September 2002)

How to pinpoint the European perspective of HRD?

Methodological considerations for building the resource base

Paper presented for discussion at the HRD Roundtable ECER 01 in Lille (08.09.2001)

First draft 14.08.01

INTRODUCTION

The objective of the accompanying measure (AM) is to build an electronic resource base of a research project cluster related to human resource development (EHRD Base). This is achieved by synthesising and reviewing major results of TSER, FP5 and other EU supported projects related to HRD and competence development. The focus will be on identifying European perspectives of HRD and on exploiting the research output for European organisations.

HRD in Europe tends to be defined in compari son to the origins and practice of HRD in the United States, as 'different from' if not 'inferior to' the latter. These arguments refer, for instance, to less autonomy of employers and more state intervention in the Euro pean context. As an alternative to this biased approach, a positive line towards the European perspective should be adopted. Among the characteristics of HRD in European organisations, which may turn out to be an added value, are the following:

- emphasis on the macro-societal framework;
- tradition of social partnership in employment relations;
- responsibility of organisations in training the work force, including initial training, apprenticeships and continuing training;
- value of the profession ('Beruf'), in central Europe, as identity for personal development;
- highly developed structure of education and training, including certification.

Altogether, the European perspective of HRD is determined by a strong link to vocational

education and by an established national/ societal context. These ch aracteristics also influence the response to challenges, facing both vocational education and HRD, of new technologies, changes in the work process and global competition. Attempts are being made in many European countries to foster links between educati on and work, between schools and enterprises. New patterns of work-based initial and continuous training emerge, with enter - prises looking for efficient ways of facilitating apprenticeships, assignments, on-the-job train - ing, further training and staff development. In view of these dynamic developments, the European perspective of HRD should be conceived as a tension between global demands and European concepts and practices, with new approaches to HRD arising out of this tension.

APPROACH

To start with, the field of 'European HRD' – as objective of the EHRD Base – needs to be defined. This will be attempted by constructing a map including major areas of investigation. The next step is to assemble evidence of the European perspective of HRD. The basis for this procedure is an analysis of the output of comparative studies concerned with the European characteristics of HRD. In a final step, major 'signposts' of the European perspective of HRD are identified. These will serve to monitor the surveys and reviews in the EHRD Base, in support of further research.

(1) Mapping the field of EHRD

Initial reflections outlined above suggest that the European perspective of HRD is closely related to contextual factors. Our point of departure therefore is to define the field of HRD in the broadest possible sense, highlighting its linkages to related areas of business, education and the labour market. At the same time, the focus of attention within this broad context needs to be clarified. Key concepts in this respect are assumed to be learning, competence and knowledge development.

The map below is intended to define the subject- matter of the EHRD Base, by presenting the overall field of research and identifying special areas of investigation. While the map serves to reflect the contextual approach adopted for the EHRD Base, it is NOT designed to depict any causal relationships (factors of development, dependency or effect) or to mirror any established models of HRD.

Broad field of EHRD

The common point of reference and central framework of activity is the **ORGANISATION** (incl. the environment of networks and regions). The coordinates are three major **PROCESSES**: work, learning and management; each of these is related to its wider **CONTEXT**: labour market, education system and business. The outer circle depicts the key **ACTORS** involved in the major processes: workers/'human resources', professionals/ trainers, and managers/ social partners. The inner circle shows the **OFFERS** made by the key actors in the major processes: competences/ skills and knowledge; pedagogical means; incentives.

The map also provides a semantic background for 'locating' the following major **CONCEPTS**:

Concepts included in the broad field of EHRD

'CDO'	Competence development in organisations, incl. identity formation
CVT	Continuing vocational training (focus on company-based or –sponsored training)
HRD/ HRM	Human resource development/ Human resource management
'LFS'	'Labour force skills': Skills development of the economically active population
KM/ WPK	Knowledge management/ work process knowledge
LO/ LR	Learning organisation/ Learning region
WBL/ WRL	Work-based learning/ Work-related learning (focus on employees, NOT apprenticeships etc.)

(2) Mapping the European perspective

The European perspective of HRD has been considered in various studies (see references below), comparing European countries either with the USA (and Japan) or between themselves. Partly, this issue has been treated at conceptual level, providing hypotheses for debate and further study; partly empirical research has been carried out, in particular contrasting evidence from the USA and Europe.

The initial HRD cluster workshops (1999) were taking these issues up, by involving experts in a debate on the European perspective. While these events didn't go beyond producing notes on flipcharts and transparencies, they illustrated the value of tracing the European perspective of HRD in projects and their outcomes. In this process, the European perspective, while sparked off by external comparison (with the USA/ Japan), became an instrument for 'internal inspection': generating awareness of the societal, economic and cultural context in which HRD in European organisations is developing.

The envisaged resource base is intended to build on these various efforts and to provide evidence drawn from current research projects. While most of these projects don't actually address the issue of a European perspective, they nevertheless include a lot of implicit knowledge in how they describe approaches to HRD (or learning organisations etc) in companies, regional networks or national contexts. The challenge for the EHRD Base therefore is to find ways of making this implicit knowledge explicit.

For this purpose, methodological tools are required which help pinpoint the European perspective of HRD. An approach adopted for the EHRD resource base is to use descriptors called 'signposts' which serve to indicate European perspectives (potential or real) in available outcomes of research. How can these descriptors be generated? A basic resource for this procedure are those studies which address the issue of the European perspective of HRD (as European dimension/ model/ outlook/ perspective/ vision etc.). Evaluation is focused on developments in Europe and across European countries, rather than external comparison with the USA or Japan. All these records referring to a European perspective are compiled and evaluated, with the aim of identifying key concepts which may be used for constructing the 'signposts'.

The records of the European perspective are being compiled in the table below. Vertically, they are arranged according to three levels:

- **framework of HRD** (societal and corporate values, cultural traditions etc);
- **HRD functions** (in particular roles of HRD professionals);
- **processes within HRD** (continuing training, learning arrangements etc.).

Within each level, evidence is listed chronologically based on the date of publication.

Horizontally, each record is described by five attrib utes:

Category	>Issues of debate/ interpretation or >Pattern of development/ situation >Thesis = assumption/ hypothesis or >Findings = outcome of empirical research
Context	Context of evidence and terms of comparison
Contents	Quotation or summary of the original piece of evidence
Key terms	Selected terms taken from the original evidence to identify the issue or pattern in brief
Source	Index of reference (referring to a separate list of references)

The records relate to any case in which a European perspective has been considered, independent of whether the perspective turns out to be different from or similar to other perspectives (e.g. US). This is because a lot of these assessments are tentative, with results of comparison being conditioned by limited or selected empirical data. Therefore, perspectives which appear to be similar in one study might be considered different in another.

Care is taken to indicate, for each record, which country, region, organisation etc a 'European' perspective refers to (section 'Context'). This differentiated approach takes account of the diversity of developments within Europe, guarding against simple generalisations about common 'European' features of HRD.

The sources considered for the map below are confined to publications (incl. final project reports). Informal material like transparencies from the cluster workshops or related events, although valuable as outcome of or input for debate, has not been included. This is because those brief notes cannot be used on their own, outside the context of communication. Selected material will, however, be made available in an annex, as a reference for those who took part in the discussions concerned.

Records of the European perspective of HRD

Category	Contents	Context	Key terms	Source
	Framework of HRD			
Thesis	Concerning HRM in Europe, there are clear country differences which can be understood in the context of each national culture and its manifestation in history, law, institutions and trade union and employing organisation structures; or in terms of regional clusters.	Comparison between Europe and USA	context of national culture	Brewster 1993, p. 775

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Category	Contents	Context	Key terms	Source
Findings	Four resourcing models in Europe: • Germany: apprenticeship; subsequent low training and reskilling; • Scandinavia: advanced labour market planning, low skill shortage; high line manager involvement; • Central Europe (FR, IRL, NL, UK): professionalised personnel function, supported by line managers; low levels of apprenticeship; • Southern Europe (ES, PT, TR): technical skills via external labour market; flexible work methods to attract scarce labour.	Cluster analysis based on data of the Price Waterhouse Cranfield Project	Points of national differentiation: • apprenticeship; • line manager involvement; • high/ low skill shortage; • external/ (internal) labour market	Brewster et al. 1994
Thesis	In Europe there tends to be: • more restricted employer autonomy; • less stress in free-market processes; • less emphasis on the individual with more on the group; • greater focus on workers rather than management, • increased role of 'social partners' in the employment relationship; • higher levels of government intervention or support in many areas of HRM.	Distinguishing continental Europe from the USA	emphasis on: • the group (rather than individual) • the workers (rather than management); • the social partners; • government intervention or support	Sparrow et al. 1994, quoted by Nyhan 1999, p. 21
Thesis	HRM in Europe needs to be analysed in a context which witnesses competing forces of economic, social and business integration and disintegration coupled with complex patterns of both convergence and divergence in management practice.		competing forces in management practice: integration and disintegration; convergence and divergence	Sparrow 1995, p. 935
Findings	Companies emphasised 'high skill-level workers' as the backbone of the enterprise; they also assigned an important role to collective trade union representation and the influence of national government support frameworks.	Study on 11 large manufacturing and process companies in 7 European countries	emphasis on: • high skill-level workers; • collective trade union representation; • government support	Nyhan 1999, p. 21; based on Docherty et al. 1997
Thesis	In terms of competence profiles, the European professional/ occupational identity approach is situated mid-way between the individualistic job orientation of the USA and the corporatist/ company/ job for life perspective of Japan.		professional/ occupational identity approach	Nyhan 1999, p. 21f.
Thesis	Global free market competition is challenging European work-related value; the development of flexible workers is a direct challenge to the notion of 'profession' or 'occupation' (professional/ occupational identity).	Referring to continental and Nordic Europe	challenging notions: 'flexible worker' and professional/ occupational identity'	Nyhan 1999, p. 21f.

Category	Contents	Context	Key terms	Source
Findings/ Thesis	The commonalities in outlook on HRD between Europe, Japan and the USA are more significant than the differences. This result may be caused by the concentration in the study on large organisations which share the context of the global economy. The inclusion of SMEs might have led to different results, since these operate in varying regional and local economies.	Case studies of 28 large organisations in 7 European countries; literature review on HRD in Japan and the USA	dependence of HRD outlook on type and economic context of organisation	Horst et al. 1999, p. 155
Findings	HRD strategies within Europe have more commonalities (especially concerning the vision on HRD functions and the implementation of strategies) than cross-country differences. The differences are related to national jurisdictions and regulations, including rights on educational leave; training costs; relationships between VET and HRD; and school-to-work transition practices.	Case studies of 28 large organisations in 7 European countries	common HRD strategies – different regulations of VET	Horst et al. 1999, p. 156
Findings/ Thesis	European organisations find themselves dealing with strong competitive markets and/or fast changing technologies. In response, their strategies focus on improving organisational flexibility. Human resources are regarded as a key to competitiveness. Employee learning and related strategies, such as knowledge management/ knowledge sharing and creating a learning culture, are key issues for these organisations.	Case studies of 28 large organisations in 7 European countries, selected as good examples of learning oriented organisations	HRD as factor of organisational flexibility; key issues: • employee learning; • knowledge management/ sharing; • learning culture	Horst et al. 1999, p. 144; Horst 1999a, p. 17
Thesis	European industrial/ working life cultural traditions place much greater emphasis on the role of the skilled workers rather than managers, on the role of social partners in the employment relationship, and envisage an intervening role by government.	Referring to Northern continental and Nordic Europe; comp. with the USA	emphasis on: • cultural traditions; • skilled workers; • social partners; • government intervention	Nyhan 2001, Vol. II, p. 240
Thesis	The 'humanistic-developmental' perspective of the Harvard human resources model complements mainstream European industrial and working life traditions.	Referring to 'many large European countries': late 1980s and 1990s	humanistic HRM	Nyhan 2001, Vol. II, p. 241
Thesis	Related to the 'humanistic' HRM is the concept of 'social shaping of technology and work': a high degree of control by the workforce of the work environment ensures productivity and conditions of continuous learning; workers are developing 'work process knowledge'; the workers' role is strengthened by an occupational identity.	Concept arising from German tradition	concepts of: • social shaping of technology and work; • work process knowledge; • occupational identity	Nyhan 2001, Vol. II, p. 242

Category	Contents	Context	Key terms	Source
	HRD functions			
Findings	HRD practitioners' perceptions of their work performance (common features in 5 countries, with particularly high score by country in brackets): • role choices: change agents (FI, UK), instructors (DE, IT), programme designers (IT) and managers; additional roles: coach, reflective developer, consultative communicator; • work output: plans, strategies, guidance and support; • areas of competence: interaction, information analysis, organisation, and learning processes (DE, FI). Altogether, a diversity of roles corresponding to the diversity of the HRD field itself.	Comparison of 5 European countries: DE, FI, IT, NL, UK (carried out 1992-96), applying a questionnaire used in an US survey (late eighties)	HRD practitioner: diversity of roles	Valkavaara 1998, pp. 174-185
Findings	European organisations tend to integrate their development practices: corporate strategy, organisational development, HRM and HRD. Their HRD strategies are more integrated in business than in Japanese and US organisations.	Case studies of 28 large organisations in 7 European countries, selected as good examples of learning oriented organisations	integration of HRD strategies in business	Horst et al. 1999, p. 155, 156
Findings	The role of HRD professionals is changing from trainer to consultant. Their strategic role is to link HRD closely to business; their practical role is to provide learning opportunities for employees. The execution of HRD activities is a shared responsibility of HRD professionals, managers and employees.	Case studies of 28 large organisations in 7 European countries, selected as good examples of learning oriented organisations	role of HRD professionals changing from trainer to consultant; shared responsibility of HRD professionals, managers and employees	Horst et al. 1999a, p. 17; Horst et al. 1999, p. 145-147
	Processes within HRD			
Findings	Off-the-job training is still an important strategy, but it is complemented by strategies to support self-directed and informal learning and to link training with organisational strategy.	Case studies of 28 large organisations in 7 European countries, selected as good examples of learning oriented organisations	training complemented by support of self-directed and informal learning	Horst et al. 1999, p. 146, 147

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Category	Contents	Context	Key terms	Source
Findings	Training related developments anticipated by HRD professionals in the Netherlands and the USA show the following probability: • less emphasis on traditional training concepts; learning will be more integrated with work: NL higher than USA; • increase in self-guided learning and team learning: NL higher than USA; • increased employee responsibility for own work and career path: NL a bit higher than USA; • more training will be delivered 'just in time' and directly within the context of a job or task: NL about equal to USA; • the emphasis on high-performance work implies shift from isolated skill building to performance improvement: NL equal to USA; • companies will continue to experiment with centralisation and decentralisation, searching for the right mix of overall direction and local delivery of training: NL lower than USA.	Comparative study, based on an US survey (published 1994) and a subsequent Dutch survey, with nearly identical questionnaires, referring to 17 potential organisational developments (organisational, technological and training developments).	Anticipated developments: • learning integrated with work; • self-guided learning and team learning; • employee responsibility for own work and career path; • training will be delivered 'just in time'; • shift from skill building to performance improvement	Streumer et al. 1999, pp. 263-272
Finding	Developments in European companies: • a shift from formal training to non-formal learning; emphasis on more generic skills; move towards individual, group and organisational learning; • a shift from traditional industrial relations to participatory and partnership relations; alignment of learning strategies and social dialogue.	12 large multinational companies across 4 countries representing major models of HRM practice (DE, IT, SE, UK); LEONARDO research project PIE (1997-98)	Shift: • from formal training to non-formal learning; generic skills; • from traditional industrial relations to participatory relations. Alignment of learning and social dialogue	Kelleher et al. 2000, pp. 42-47

(3) Monitoring research outcomes

In the map above various concepts related to the European perspective of HRD have been identified. These provide raw material for constructing the 'signposts'. This final process involves synthesising and editing, aimed at formulating key issues or processes which may help identify essential developments of HRD in Europe. The main concern is to capture the complexity and diversity of these developments rather than to highl ight specific features assumed to be specifically 'European' in comparison to other parts of the world.

Furthermore, the issues and processes under consideration have to allow for a broader interpretation or outlook than the limited evidence in the compil ed records above suggest.

There is for instance a clear lack of investigations regarding SMEs and smaller European countries; only some hypotheses touch on the anticipated differences of HRD in these contexts. The issues and processes, therefore, should be formulated as open rather than definite perspectives.

Last but not least, the set of issues and processes to be derived from HRD specific studies has to accommodate the broad field of HRD which is envisaged for the resource base. This suggests that the widest possible spectrum of concepts mentioned in those studies needs to be considered, even if they might appear to be marginal in the outcome concerned.

Signposts of the European perspecti ve of HRD

S01	Specific HRD strategies in large and medium/ small organisations
S02	National employment and training regulations shaping HRD
S03	National patterns of overcoming skill shortages
S04	Shift from skill building to performance improvement and generic skills/ competences
S05	Adjusting off-the-job training to organisational flexibility
S06	Notion of 'flexible worker' challenging 'professional identity'
S07	Changing role of HRD professionals (from trainer to consultant)
S08	Sharing responsibility for HRD between professionals, managers and employees
S09	Integrating work and learning in organisation s
S10	Self-directed and informal learning as organisational strategy
S11	Knowledge sharing as both managerial and participatory approach
S12	Aligning learning strategies and social dialogue in organisations

The issues and processes outlined above are still provisional. As signposts they have to serve two conflicting purposes: while reflecting the complexity of HRD perspectives, they should be concise and easy to handle as tools in the resource base (for marking and retrieving outcomes of debates, projects and studies). In the search function of the EHRD Base the signposts will be used alongside the major concepts describing the research field (CVT, LO, WPK etc – see semantic map). The final step of editing and matching these two sets of descriptors has to be combined with practical testing.

Outlook

What can we expect from applying the signposts in the EHRD Base? This approach might be described as a collaborative collection of evidence: identifying potentially relevant signals of a European perspective from a gradually emerging resource which is commonly shared. It will be up to individual experts or teams to evaluate this evidence and analyse it further, using the extended sources linked to the base. In this process, feedback on the value of the signposts and their possible modification may be expected. This in turn would help promote the methodology for identifying European perspectives.

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